

## Triennial Reunion August 8-11, 2019

Little America Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Early Bird Registration extended to April 21!

Our experience at ACS was unique to those of us who shared it. Gather with us in beautiful Salt Lake City to reconnect, renew, and reminisce.

### Yallah!

Reserve your room now at (801) 596-5700.  
(Be sure to ask for the AA/ACS Reunion block.)  
Register for the reunion at <https://www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1685>.  
Check out our website at [www.acsreunion.com](http://www.acsreunion.com) for more information.

#### Schedule

Thursday - Hospitality Room opens 3 p.m.  
Reception and cash bar. Dinner on your own.

Friday - Hospitality Room opens 9 a.m.  
Choir practice, sightseeing/reuniting, and class dinners (We have some yummy restaurants lined up for you!)  
Friday night festivities, including a performance by our famed Reunion Choir!  
Cash bar and snacks.

Saturday - Hospitality Room opens 9 a.m.  
Business Meeting, speakers, and special presentations.  
Reunion Banquet followed by dancing and cash bar.

Sunday - Farewell Breakfast.  
Opportunity to hear the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square live broadcast (Free).

It's an experience you will not soon forget!

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## The Diaspora Potrzebie

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### Websites

AA/ACS: <http://almashriq.hiof.no/acs/>  
ACS at Beirut: [www.acs.edu.lb](http://www.acs.edu.lb)  
ACS Matters [www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1326](http://www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1326)

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All correspondence should be sent to AA/ACS Membership Services, 13570 NE 54th Place, Bellevue, WA 98005-1036. Our legal address is: 3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 8th Floor, New York NY 10017-2303. *The Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. (AA/ACS) does not take positions on religious, political, social topics, or issues and does not endorse the positions or opinions given from time to time by contributors to this newsletter.* © 1990–2019 Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. All Rights Reserved.

## President's letter

Thank you for your continued support of your alumni association. Some have helped plan the reunion coming up August 8-11 in Salt Lake City. Many have made financial contributions, large and small to support the Malcolm Kerr Endowment and the AA/ACS General Fund. Others have continued to maintain the ties and connections with their fellow ACSers and that is the essence of this organization.

**Pat Hinds '56** has good news to share with you on our financial condition. With your support, we can reach our goal to raise \$85,000 in 2019. This will provide the investment basis to fully fund a Malcolm Kerr scholar at ACS in future years.

**Melo Soghanalian-Hansen '78** and her geographically-dispersed team are hard at work making preparations for the upcoming reunion. If you have not yet registered, see the registration form or links in this issue.

**Zeyd Tabbara '11** is in the final stages of launching the Buddy Program to connect junior year students at ACS with ACSers who have current knowledge of schools or academic disciplines so that they can make better informed college choices. You should see an email shortly.

This is the last year in office for the current Board of Governors of the alumni association. If you are interested in running for a seat on the alumni board please contact me via the alumni contact form on the ACS website: [acs.edu.lb](http://acs.edu.lb). The slate of candidates will be announced in the June issue and in accordance with the bylaws, elections will occur between July 1-31.

The Board of Trustees of ACS, who has the legal responsibility for the governance of the school, has asked the alumni association to rename the alumni Board of Governors. Some have been confused by the existence of two boards. We are considering alternative names and will keep you apprised.

Alums have made requests for a new alumni directory. The last one we printed was in 2007; it sold poorly and was outdated within a year. Due to the expense and issues of personal privacy, we are reluctant to print another edition. We worked with the school to put a directory online, but very few opted in and the project was discontinued. We are considering other ways of making alumni contact information available. For the present, if you would like to contact an alum please email us via the alumni page [www.acs.edu.lb/contactalumni](http://www.acs.edu.lb/contactalumni).

Jay Bruder '74

President AA/ACS

# Hold These Truths

By Gail Chandler-Hawkins '63

In the December 2017 issue of the *Pot*, I told the story, “*Back to the Present: My 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Journey*,” about my search for, and visit with, ACS elementary school friends, **Doug Baty '63** and **Mitzi '63** and **Mari Hirabayashi '63**. Mitzi and Mari described a play, *Hold These Truths*, about the life of their father, Gordon Hirabayashi.

I am delighted to report that the play was performed in November 2018 at the Four Rivers Cultural Center in Ontario, OR (a one-hour drive from Boise). It was a powerful, fabulous performance.

Mr. Hirabayashi, born and raised near Seattle, fought the U.S. government's orders to forcibly remove and mass incarcerate all people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast. As he struggled to reconcile his country's betrayal with his passionate belief in the U.S. Constitution, Hirabayashi journeyed toward a greater understanding of America's triumphs — and a confrontation with its failures. Learn more in his autobiography, *A Principled Stand*.



Ryun Yu and Gail Chandler-Hawkins '63 after his performance of *Hold These Truths*.

man show with Ryun Yu playing the part of Hirabayashi. Yu also plays the roles of many other people with whom Hirabayashi had contact during his ordeal—on a set that consists of only a stage and three chairs. What power in that simple setting! The complexity of the story highlights Yu's remarkable acting skills. It is a full-length play, bringing the past vividly alive and resonating especially strongly in these days when anyone looking vaguely different can be the victim of “racial profiling.” Ultimately, it is the powerful and moving story of one man who, in his own words, “could not give up on the Constitution.” Ryun Yu does absolutely stunning work as Hirabayashi. Sakata and her colleagues fashioned a gripping, suspenseful, yet also frequently funny play which honors Hirabayashi's battles and celebrates his ultimate victory.

I encourage anyone who would like to bring the play to their city to contact the playwright, Jeanne Sakata, by going to [holdthesetruths.info](http://holdthesetruths.info)

*Hold These Truths*, written by Jeanne Sakata, is a one-

## Would you like to serve as a governor on the AA/ACS board?

Elections for the AA/ACS Board of Governors (a fifteen member board) are held every three years. Anyone who was a student at ACS is an eligible candidate —you need not have graduated from ACS. You may self-nominate to stand for election or nominate someone else. Each volunteer candidate (self-nominee) will be contacted by the Nominating Committee and asked to provide a brief biography and each nominee will in addition be asked to confirm that they are willing to stand for election and serve if elected. All candidates will be provided with a set of Job Descriptions and estimated time commitments for each office or position. Please respond by Friday, April 19, 2019 to the ACS Alumni contact form: [www.acs.edu.lb/contactalumni](http://www.acs.edu.lb/contactalumni).

### 2019 Nominating Committee Members

Jay Bruder '74 President  
Jeff Hutchins '65

# The 1969 ACS Boys Basketball Team

by Doug Cleland '70

A half century ago, Beirut was in its heyday - the cosmopolitan center of the Middle East. Mostly excluded from the turmoil of the June Six-Day War in 1967, Beirut was still years away from breaking our collective hearts upon being ravaged and destroyed by its own civil war. ACS was thriving as the go-to international school in the region in the late sixties, attracting student boarders to its strong curriculum and safe environs from nearby countries.

Our family “parachuted” into Beirut in the summer of 1967 for a two-year stint; my father, through the Ford Foundation, helped AUB create its developmental economics curriculum. My siblings and I were townies who walked to school each day, the first year down the AUB steps from Rue Bliss. For the 1968-69 school year, we lived on the second floor of the corner high rise just southwest of the ACS compound next to the dirt playing field.

ACS had the most students in its first 62 years of existence that school year. The theme of the *Al-Manara* year book was *Past Determines Present*. As my two oldest grandchildren are now high school age, like many of you, this is my third generational experience in youth sports, the wonders of teenage innocence and discovery of beckoning adulthood.

ACS was in the wheelhouse of its very successful high school basketball program, bolstered by the only indoor gymnasium in Lebanon, surely the envy of every Lebanese youth as they first learned of its simple wonders or experienced it for the first time as a visiting student-athlete readying to face ACS.

After a very successful varsity boys basketball season the year before (led by then-senior **Mark Williams '68** - “the Hoover” for his rebounding prowess), the 1969 season measured up as another exciting year of roundball. Coached by the youthful **John Nelson Fac** (who was spouse to math teacher **Ann Nelson Fac**), the Blue Knights were deep and talented, led by co-captains **Danny Swenson '69** and **John Mundt '69**, and starters **Cliff Barnard '69**, **Charlie Burge '70** and **Jeff Henderson '71**. I shared substitution minutes with **Chris Baker '69** and **Steve Bobrowski '69**. **Ron Bowman '70**, **Scott Williams '71**, **Willie Cheek '71**, and **Dikran Mavissakalian '70** got the many mop-up minutes available as we averaged 20-point wins for the season.

Our team won 16 games in a row after taking a stinging and bizarre two-point loss at Sacre Coeur, the Lebanese National Champions, who we later crushed 58-26 at our

house. This brought us to the excitement of hosting our first international tournament, with the chance to play against some other (mostly) American squads. We were seeded first of the six team slate, with the expectation of playing the American School of Tehran after our first round bye. My family hosted one of the players from that Tehran team.

But fate found Tehran losing to local Patriarcal, so we made our way to the tourney final by handily defeating Patriarcal 66-52 for the third time that season. The other semi found powerhouses ACS Athens and George Marshall of Ankara, who openly declared that they regarded their game as the real tourney decider. Athens advanced 60-52, setting up our championship finale.

We dominated “The Game” in the first half, taking an impressive fifteen-point lead. Tragedy had struck the right knee of Swenson, and without our playmaker, Athens fought back to nip us 57-55. We finished the season at 17-2. Henderson led the team in scoring at nearly 14 points per game.

Dan Swenson has kept in touch with several team members and Coach Nelson over the years and is excited to attend the Utah 50<sup>th</sup> reunion in August. He reports the passing of Chris Baker nearly two decades ago, and recently the other co-captain John Mundt. It reminds us all of our brief moments on this earth and how lucky we are to live them to their fullest. After attending ACS since first grade, Dan became an Air Force pilot. One of his assignments was as an instructor pilot in Saudi Arabia, where he met his bride Cathy, a teacher at Aramco’s Dhahran School. They have three daughters and five grandkids, retiring to Wisconsin and cattle ranching.

Cliff Barnard reports finishing up a big trial as a criminal defense lawyer as he approaches retirement. He and his wife **Becky Sibley '70** live in Bolder Colorado. He recalls staying in touch with Chris Baker, who had a seemingly photographic memory of the ACS basketball season.

Steve Bobrowski reports a technology career that included a stint with Aramco in Saudi Arabia with his wife Cheri. He played bball until he was 40, and looks to exploring the U.S. in their RV now that his five grandchildren are older. He recalls being reminded by Coach Nelson at the 1991 ACS Seattle reunion of his late-game missed layup in the tournament finale against Athens. It’s funny because my memories of that game are my several unfortunate misplays

## Boys Basketball Continued

late in the first half as our big lead unraveled.

Willie Cheek remembers this ACS basketball season as his first of three varsity seasons that each ended with two losses including one in a tournament finale, reminding us how history can eerily repeat itself. His fondest memory (embarrassment?) of the 1969 season was when at a pep rally always-the-kidder Coach Nelson introduced Willie as the only player to bring four dates with him to a party for the team hosted by the Nelsons. Willie went on to play basketball as an adult until his coworkers threatened to quit from his weekly complaints of his aching basketball body, surely a theme for all of us as we played the game we loved despite Father Time's cruel interventions. Willie had a successful career in the Air Force and insurance and shares his three kids and three grandkids with his wife Sheryl.

Scott Williams, younger brother to the Hoover, reports his fond memories at ACS and a successful career in petroleum software engineering. He and his wife Abi are retired in Austin, Texas and recently celebrated their thirtieth anniversary at their original honeymoon spot in Mykonos.

Coach John Nelson was a charismatic and personable coach, only a decade or so older than his players, and loved to joke with us all. The Nelsons left Beirut after the season, and John taught, administered, and coached at Lake Forest College in Illinois and at a Texas high school sandwiched between working in various capacities and world-wide locations for GTE (now Verizon). He has two sons and helps care for wife, Ann.

Nelson recalls the 1969 season well: "We were a very solid defensive team almost always in a 2-1-2 zone. Danny Swenson and Jeff Henderson could move their feet out front and did a great job of plugging up the high post. Charlie Burge did a fine job of denying the low post and everyone rotated well with the ball movement. Cliff Barnard was inch-for-inch as good a rebounder as I ever coached and a heck of a competitor! John Mundt was pretty solid all around even coming off his knee surgery. I do not think we were as good as the 1968 team as Mark Williams gave that team superb outside shooting and extra rebounding. We turned the ball over very seldom. Swenson was very savvy, what we would now call point guard though that term did not exist in 1969. Jeff Henderson was just an excellent athlete who could do it all. My worst memory is the loss to Athens, which had Danny not been hurt, I have no doubts we would have won by ten."

I grew five inches over the 1968 summer, topping out at a lanky 6-feet-3, 135 lbs. They called me the Rail, and it was said that if I turned sideways, I simply disappeared. I have always loved sports, wrote high school sports part-time for a local daily, and actively continued my love affair with the hardwood until about ten years ago. Now retired as a city manager, my wife Colleen of 41 years (who I met on a bus in Columbus, Ohio) and I enjoy our three children and four grandchildren.

In sports, like life, moments in the sun can be bright and fleeting. ACS provided us with so many wonderful life experiences that we all still treasure to this day.

---

### Lost Alums

Ann Zimmerman-Finley '60

Sarah Schutte-Beebe '73

Daphne Iatrides-Trilling '75

David Swenson '75

Carolina Garrett '83

Soufian Mamlouk '04

Bylasan Ahmad '18

Ann Ratcliffe Fac

### New Member

Bruce Walker Ferguson '72

### Follow us on ...



ACS Knights



ACS Beirut



ACS Beirut



ACS Beirut

## Alumni Association Financial Report End of the Year 2018

Thanks to your generosity the Alumni Association finished 2018 with more than \$95,000 in assets. This includes the \$50,000 set aside in a CD-based contingency fund to cover our exposure in contracting the triennial reunions. Our other accounts are sufficient to fund the association's activities for all of 2019 and into 2020, supporting our objective of a cash position adequate to sustain operations for two years. Of special note is the heartening response to our appeal to grow donations to the Malcolm Kerr Endowment Fund sufficient to fully fund an annual scholarship.

- By your generosity, the Malcolm Kerr Endowment donations submitted via the association reached \$55,000. Coupled with more than \$29,000 of donations submitted directly to ACS, the total of donations reached nearly \$85,000 in 2018. More donations have accrued in January pushing current donation totals to more than \$87,000.
- You also provided more than \$12,000 in direct support to the association.
- The quarterly newsletter, other mailings, and administrative costs came in just over \$21,000. We will continue working to reduce these costs.

In 2019, we intend to continue emphasis on the Malcolm Kerr scholarship while maintaining healthy cash balances. Our goal is to grow the scholarship endowment to a total of \$600,000, the level that can support the full annual scholarship. **As of the end of December 2018, the endowment value was \$515,155 including all of the 2018 donations by alumni, just \$85,000 short of our goal. Based on the 2018 results, raising an additional \$85,000 is a very achievable goal. If met, a full scholarship could be awarded in 2020. Let's do it!**

Submitted by,

Patrick Hinds '56, Treasurer

## AA/ACS Treasures Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

### INCOME

Malcolm Kerr Contributions	\$55,210
General Fund Contributions	\$12,350
Interest	\$230
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$67,790</b>

### EXPENSES

Malcolm Kerr	\$55,000
Management	\$2,007
Newsletter and Donation Solicitation	\$21,110
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$78,117</b>

FUND BALANCE AS OF BEGINNING OF YEAR \$106,065

FUND BALANCE AS OF END OF YEAR \$95,738



## Why I Gave

### A Letter from an Alum from the Class of 1977

I hope my note finds you well as we move into the new year. May 2019 be one of happiness and good health for all of us as we rise to the challenges, personal and public that we face in our everyday lives.

I am prompted to write to you after receiving the latest Pot in the mail today! Is this the last paper newsletter?! I loved reading it, as usual, and was especially touched by **John Illick's '71** letter and contribution to the Malcolm Kerr Scholarship.

On a personal note, I will include ACS in my will (specifically the MK Fund for scholarships), just as I have done for other institutions. My alma maters co-paved and supported me on the earliest path on my life journey.

"And, I, I, chose the road less traveled" – Robert Frost

# Alumni Notes

**Charlotte Gossens-Mitchell '55** writes: **Gay Leeman '55** called me and found I was on their way on their ongoing visit to Bar Harbor. They came to the island and we had a wonderful lunch together, but admitted we wouldn't have recognized each other walking down the street. That didn't matter and two old ACSers had a grand visit with many remembrances of classmates, the first time we saw each other in 63 years!



**Borre Ludvigsen '64** after his visit to ACS on December 19 wrote to **Nivin Rawda Fac**: Thanks for showing me around the campus. It grows increasingly unrecognizable for each year I come back. I was first there after the war in 1995 (<http://tinyurl.com/y9q7wwad>) and it has changed a lot since then.

You may have noticed that I am listed as "Overseas Correspondent" in the *Pot*, but I'm afraid I've been neglecting my duties for quite some time. However, I do circulate among alumni the URL for pictures I take on

every personal trip to Beirut: <http://abdallah.hiof.no/homepage/lebanon/> (where you appear in the latest).



Borre with Toufoul Abou-Hodeib and their daughter.

**Courtney Draper-Geer '67** writes to say: I am retired now and living by the water on the Northern Neck of Virginia.

**Dorinda Dorsey '68** had a most interesting visit with **Sarah Rich Fac** in which they reenacted a trophy being presented, using the original trophy. "It was a beautiful day in Palm Springs. Great conversation... And, she bought lunch."



**William McClelland Laziza '68** is Technical Director at Micro Museum on Smith Street, Brooklyn, NY. Their tag line is: Small Venue Big Art since 1986. Visit: <http://www.micromuseum.com/>

**Bruce Walker Ferguson '72** contacted us via the ACS website: Hi! Attended ACS from 1968-69 in ninth grade. Now reside in Sulaimani, Iraq with significant time in Great Falls, Virginia. Hope to connect with former ACSers at either location. You can reach him on gmail at [fergusonbrucew](mailto:fergusonbrucew).



**Thea Abu El-Haj '79** left Rutgers over a year ago and is now Associate Professor and Chair of Education at Barnard College Columbia University. Her latest book is "Unsettled Belonging: Educating Palestinian American Youth after 9/11."

## Alumni Notes Continued

**Ramsay Harik '82** and **Fac** taught history at ACS in 1992-93. Since then he has taught history and religious studies at prep schools all around the country. Two years ago he made a major career switch when he moved back to his hometown of Bloomington, IN to open a small garden center specializing in native plants and environmentally-friendly gardening products. He continues to write and teach on the side.

**Patricia Atkinson '83** visited ACS on October 25, 2018 with her mom and dad and then sent this note: Apologies for the very long delay in replying - after our wonderful trip to Beirut I came back to a lot of work, but now am slowing down again for the holiday season. Thank you so much for taking the photos of our visit to ACS. It brought back such wonderful memories of our time in the ACS community in the 1970s (I was at ACS in 1974-75 for 4th grade. My high school graduation class would have been 1983.) It is wonderful that you



are so welcoming to past students - it still feels like a family even though many years have passed. We have such fond memories of that time - really the strongest memories of my childhood—and it so nice to come back and feel immediately the same ACS communal spirit. I look forward to my next visit, and perhaps I can come with my two sisters as we were all together just a few years apart in the lower school. Reported by **Nivin Rawda Fac**.

**Zahra Hussain '06** shared these thoughts after a campus visit in November: I would have never imagined that the 17th of July 2006 would be the day I would leave my heart in my beloved Beirut for good. My friends from ACS fittingly had thrown a goodbye party on the eve before the war. None of us had an idea that we would all scatter all over the world without really getting to see each other again. I certainly never got to go back to the school that had silently but surely moulded a strong sense of character, integrity, and most importantly my creativity.

Although I had made a few trips to Beirut in between, come fourteen years later, I finally gathered the courage to revisit old memories. I had weathered a war, lost my younger brother **Mian Mohammad Hussain '11** who was at ACS through grade seven and passed away in Pakistan in 2010, started a job, gotten married, and finally decided to chase my dream of becoming an artist. It often felt difficult for me to really dwell on the physical memories. I would paint about Beirut but not want to go deep into the physicality of it. As **Karma Sleiman '06** and I walked down the elementary school hallways to pick up her son (second generation ACSer), my heart stopped. I spotted

my name on a silver plaque, not quite believing whether it was really mine. As a receipt of the ACS Fine Art for 2006, the management had put up our names. After many years, did I feel a giddy sense of joy, almost like a four year old receiving her favourite candy! Everything felt the same, the elementary halls where I would go to pick my brother up, the courtyard where I would spend many lunches and breaks, seeing **Mr. Orfali Fac** casually walk by, I felt like I was back home.

I never really left ACS in many ways. The strong conviction for following your dreams followed me everywhere, and gave me the courage to become an artist. My work would revolve around the impact of social-political norms on our inner being. I would often think of my time in Beirut; how our education was shaped both within the school and the opportunities it gave us. From visiting Sabra Chatila where we taught English to having 'protests' in school (our class was quite political), we gained an education which was unparalleled.



# In Memoriam

**Daniel Bliss Leavitt '40** died peacefully on Sunday, July 8, 2018, at the age of 95. He was born February 25, 1923, in Beirut, Lebanon, to Margaret (Bliss) Leavitt and Leslie Westbrook Leavitt. Dan and his siblings and cousins grew up on the campus of the American University of Beirut, founded by their great-grandfather, Daniel Bliss, in a community that welcomed all religions and nationalities. He recalled an idyllic childhood of exploring caves, camping in the cedars of Lebanon, collecting fossils, and playing hide-and-seek (“sardines”) in Crusader castles. His family spent summers in the mountain village of Ainab, where supplies arrived by donkey.

At 16, he and five classmates set sail for prep school in the U.S. just as Germany invaded Poland. In exchange for giving up their staterooms to ex-pats desperate to return home ahead of the war, the young students were offered jobs in the ship’s laundry. By the time they reached the U.S., the blockade was firm, and Dan would not see his parents again for seven years. Being thrust into adulthood from a sheltered home life was formative. A “third-culture kid,” neither American nor Lebanese, he could relate to the feelings of being an outsider.

Dan attended Vermont Academy, received his B.A from Amherst College, and his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Andover Newton Theological School. In WW.II, he served in the U.S. Navy as a navigation and communications officer on an LST in the western Pacific. Alone, on night watch, he was moved by the splendor of the night sky and his infinitesimal place in the cosmos. His ship was among the first to enter Nagasaki harbor after the atomic bomb, and he never forgot the devastation or the terrified children he tried to befriend.

During the social unrest of the 1960s, he was willing to take unpopular stands on civil rights and the Vietnam War. In the 1970s, he and Lois served Mt. Silinda, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), during the country’s struggle for independence.

Dan was a beloved pastor who touched many lives. He married hundreds of couples, including his own offspring, and was known for his caring and compassion. He had the right balance of humor and *gravitas* and an excellent memory for weaving life experience into his sermons. His memoir, “Cogwheeling with History,” dedicated to his grandchildren, links personal stories to international events of his day.

He was also a fun father and grandfather. In his nineties he could still recite stories in Arabic. He loved boats, the night sky, Gilbert and Sullivan, Webb Lake, corny limericks, and hiking Mt. Tumbledown. He taught his children the names of the constellations, how to sail, read maps, and keep a global perspective.

In addition to his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, he is survived by a sister, **Helen Leavitt-Campbell '46**, of Paxton, Mass.; predeceased by siblings **Margaret Leavitt-Peters '43** and **Howard Leavitt '39**.



**Rev. Paton MacGilvary Zimmerman, Sr. '42**, went home to be with his Lord and his beloved wife, Virginia, on November 27, 2018.

His parents were members of the American community in Beirut, Syria of the Ottoman Empire (now Lebanon), when the Rev. Zimmerman was born on May 22, 1925, being the second of their

children to attend ACS. His parents returned the family to the United States in 1938 and he graduated from Bennett High School in 1942. He then enrolled in General Motors Institute in Flint, MI where in 1947 he received a bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering and was employed by the Fisher Body Division of General Motors until 1977 when he took an early retirement to pursue his life calling. He attended Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC and was licensed first as a Local Pastor in 1977, ordained a Deacon in the United Methodist Church in 1978, and subsequently an Ordained Elder in 1983.

He is preceded in his death by his wife of 52 years, Virginia, his parents David and Margaret Zimmerman, his brother **David Zimmerman, Jr. '40**, who died in 2014, and his sister **Dr. Ellen Zimmerman-Hooker '44**. He is survived by three sons and two daughters, his sister **Joyce Zimmerman-Robinson '47**, nine grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

Son in law Paul Coleman who graciously submitted this obituary and photos notes: His time at ACS was cut short due to the impending conflict of WWII but would have graduated with the class of '42 with his best friend for life **Eli Robinsky '42** who preceded him in death by less than 90 days.

## In Memoriam Continued



Daniel Leavitt created this three-dimensional model of the ACS area in Beirut for a reunion of ACSers in Toronto, Canada some years ago. It has been offered to the alumni association of ACS in the hopes it will be utilized, appreciated it for both its intrinsic value, and its sentimental meaning.



**John Alan Ritsher '48** died peacefully in his sleep on December 10, 2018 at age 88, with his family at his side. Born in Beirut, Lebanon on September 26, 1930 where his father was a professor at AUB, he moved to the States in 1941 in a circuitous adventure through

Palestine, Egypt, Australia, and Honolulu (in time for Pearl Harbor), sparking life-long interest in the Middle East.

A scholar and poet, John delivered the commencement address at Bowdoin College after leading the desegregation of his fraternity in 1951. During the Korean War, his flat feet and good fortune dictated he serve as a medic in Paris. Upon discharge, he earned a law degree at the University of Chicago. As a senior partner at Ropes & Gray, he represented nuclear power plants across New England.

John's lifetime labor of love was a house on Lake Winnepesaukee that he designed and built (twice!) while in college. The home on Ritsher Road was a gathering place for generations of family and friends. John savored time at "the

lake" both for quiet mornings of mist and loon song and its unlimited excuses to pound nails and rip pine boards on his trusty table saw.

John is survived by wife, two sons David and Ken, two stepchildren, and six grandchildren. He was predeceased by sisters **Ann Ritsher-Carter '42**, **Marjo Ritsher-Bunting '43**, and **Helen Ritsher-Augusta '47**.

Sons David and Ken Ritsher emailed: We would appreciate it if you would be able to run his obituary in the ACS newsletter. We know that his time in Beirut was a very important formative period in his life. We are also working through his papers which include photographs and journals of the time and would be happy to share them with you and the ACS community if you are interested. Cell: 415-305-8457



Old friends from ACS. back row: John Ritsher '48 (left), Allen West '48; in the front row left to right: Dorothy Kerr-Jessup '47, Helen Leavitt-Campbell '46, Molly Crawford-Potter '48 It was taken on August 14, 2016. Photo courtesy of Allen West.

**David William Christensen '54**, age 79, May 31, 2016. He was the son of the late Chris and Willma Hallowell Christensen. He was born in San Francisco, CA but spent much of his childhood in Saudi Arabia. His undergraduate years were spent at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of California, Santa Barbara. He received his MBA from the American Graduate School of International Management. He worked for Bechtel for many years. He continued his career with the Aramco Oil Company in Saudi Arabia. He retired in 1998 to Augusta, GA and in 2005 he moved to Salisbury. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Felicity Ann Christensen, children, and brothers, **James Christensen '53** and Paul Christensen .

## In Memoriam Continued

**David M. Hutchinson '55**, age 78, was born July 24, 1937, in Bayonne, NJ and graduated high school in 1955 from American Community School in Beirut, Lebanon. He then attended Clarkson University for two years before enlisting in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Cuban Missile Crisis. David was an accountant and tax preparer for many years and enjoyed playing chess and poker. He is survived by his sister, **Patricia Hutchinson '54** of Syracuse, co-workers and friends. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by a brother Dale Roy in 1955.

**Bruce Rohe '70** of Pflugerville, Texas left this life on September 13, 2018 after a struggle with cancer. He was born in Alice, Texas on June 24, 1952 to Beverly and Gordon Rohe. He attended public schools in Houston, Texas and two years in the American Community School in Beirut, Lebanon. He studied at Texas A&M University and Lamar University, and spent a short time in the Merchant Marines. He began his career as a draftsman at Fluor Corporation in Houston but his main career was as a construction inspector for Texas Department of Transportation. After retirement, he dedicated his love and time to his family, especially his grandchildren. He loved traveling the world, and was particularly fond of cruising. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Karen Sutherland Rohe, three children and four grandchildren. He is also survived by his brothers **Roark Rohe '66** and **Duke Rohe '68**.

**Mian Mohammad Hussain '11** who was at ACS through grade seven passed away in Pakistan in 2010. Reported by his sister **Zahra Hussain '06**.



**Helene Holenkoff Gorman Fac** of Naples, Florida, Westport NY, Doolin, County Clare, Ireland, and Versailles France, passed away peacefully in her home by the ocean on November 15, 2018. She was born in Beirut, Lebanon and spent her life making friends living and traveling across the world. She was married to the late John Craven Gorman and

is survived by her son, Gregory, and daughter, Lizette, five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. She was loved dearly and will be missed by all.

Back in 2013 **Richard S. Ward '38** shared a remembrance. How could we overlook our French teacher, the irrepressible and wonderful **Madame Holenkoff**, a princess in Russia, but only a school teacher in Beirut. She played balalaika records for us, and punished us for classroom infractions by making us memorize "*La Poesie*". I don't remember the poems, but it could have simply been things like "*Sur le pont, D'Avignon, on y danse, on y danse*". She also, one day a year, took the whole school up the coast by train to Jounieh, I think it was, for a day on the beach, speaking only French, or be dunked in the water.

**Betty Navratil-Whittlesey Fac**, age 88, passed away on June 28, 2016 in Greenfield, MA.